SALINE LOWLAND RANGE SITE

1. TOPOGRAPHY

a. This site occurs on shallow basins and lake plains and on low terraces and bottomlands along streams. Slopes are typically less than three percent.

2. SOILS

a. These are deep, poorly drained, medium and fine textured saline and alkaline soils which receive additional water from seepage and/or run-in. Surface soils commonly have small areas of salts and are sodium-affected throughout the profile. Permeability is very slow and available water capacity is moderate.

b. Soil taxonomic units common to this site are:

Exline silt loam and silty clay loam
Harriet loam, silt loam, and very fine sandy loam
Ryan silty clay and clay

Refer to Section II-A for a complete list of soil taxonomic units and range sites.

3. POTENTIAL VEGETATION

a. This site is dominated by salt-tolerant midgrasses. Principal plants are western wheatgrass, slender wheatgrass, Nuttall alkaligrass, inland saltgrass, and alkali cordgrass. Other species are plains bluegrass, foxtail barley, mat muhly, and prairie bulrush. Forb species make up about 10 percent of the total herbage production.

b. Continued heavy grazing by cattle results in a decrease of western wheatgrass, slender wheatgrass, Nuttall alkaligrass, plains bluegrass, and alkali cordgrass. Species that increase are inland saltgrass, foxtail barley, and mat muhly.

Further deterioration of the site results in a dominance of short grasses such as inland saltgrass, mat muhly, foxtail barley and undesirable forbs.

c. Approximate total annual production of this site in excellent condition is from 2400 to 3200 pounds of air-dry herbage per acre, depending on growing conditions.

d. A detailed description of the vegetation in excellent condition is as follows:

Relative Percent Composition of the Potential Vegetation

	Mean Productivity	
	lbs/acre	% composition
Grasses		
Western wheatgrass	1120	40
Slender wheatgrass	420	15
Nuttall alkaligrass	280	10
Inland saltgrass	280	10
Foxtail barley	140	5
Alkali cordgrass Plains bluegrass Alkali muhly Mat muhly Other grasses	280	10
Grasslikes		
Prairie bulrush Other grasslikes	T*	--
Forbs		
Alkali plaintain Silverweed cinquefoil Dock species Other forbs	280	10
Total	2800	100

* T refers to trace amounts, 2½ percent weight or less.

4. DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK GRAZING VALUE

a. This site is best suited for cattle and has a secondary preference for sheep because of a lack of desirable forbs. The best season of grazing is summer as the site is commonly wet in the spring. The site also has fall grazing value.

5. WILDLIFE NATIVE TO THE SITE

a. White-tailed deer and antelope obtain forage from this site. Plants that grow on this site contain high amounts of salts which attract wildlife that depend on them for part of their diet. Common upland birds that use this site are the meadowlark, lark bunting, bobolink, and horned lark. When water is available, waterfowl such as the mallard and blue-winged teal are attracted to the site.

3--Saline Lowland Range Site

6. ESTHETIC AND RELATED VALUES

a. This site has limited esthetic values. Common recreational activities associated with this site are hunting, plant study, and bird watching.

7. HYDROLOGIC CHARACTERISTICS

a. This site receives additional water by seepage and/or run-in. Runoff is slow and rate of water transmission is very slow.

8. A TYPICAL SITE LOCATION IN THIS AREA IS AS FOLLOWS